

I don't understand why vehicles are not compared on a basis of fuel economy per ton of weight for each model of vehicle. This would provide a better indication of the efficiency of the engine and drive train so that a consumer could truly compare a compact car with a SUV or light truck.

I suggest that vehicles be compared by TMPG, which is determined by the fuel consumed per mile multiplied by the weight of the vehicle in tons. For most cars and light trucks, the new comparison number would be approximately 50% higher than the existing MPG number. I think using TMPG will be a better indicator of the efficiency of the engine and drivetrain because smaller cars with smaller engines are moving a lighter weight while heavy-duty trucks with larger engines are moving a heavier weight.

Using the TMPG system shows that most vehicles are in the same efficiency range (see abstract), the big difference is in the weight of the individual model of vehicle. I know it seems that I have only validated your current use of the CAFE MPG ratings, but as an engineer it is not a true comparison between vehicles. If you truly want to reduce the amount of gasoline consumed in the US, then you need to put a limit on the number of SUV's and heavy-duty trucks that the manufacturers can produce for non-business purchase. This will drive up the price and force those that are currently buying SUV's when they don't need them for their intended use to buy a smaller car that burns less fuel because of the reduced weight.

As a SUV owner and driver I enjoy the freedom that my vehicle affords me, but I don't really need an SUV for commuting and what I regularly do on weekends. If reducing the volume of oil that the US imports is the EPA's main goal, then a system of disincentives or other penalties or limits must be imposed on the citizens of the US. If the goal of oil import reduction is that vital, then we must be forced to give up some choices in order to meet the goal because we will not do so voluntarily. As long as SUV's and trucks are available to anyone that wants to buy one, then Americans will continue to buy them no matter how low the MPG rating is.